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9 July 2003

The Honorable FIRST LAST
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative LAST:

On behalf of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA) and our over 1,250 producers and suppliers to the industry, I am writing to support legislation that would help to solve the congestion problem on our interstate highway system. Championed by Representatives Mark Kennedy (R-6-MN) and Adam Smith (D-9-WA), H.R. 1767, "The Freeing Alternatives for Speedy Transportation (FAST) Act," repeals the outdated prohibition in order to permit expansion on congested interstate corridors paid for by user fees.

The FAST Act enables states and localities to develop their own innovative solutions for interstate traffic congestion problems. The bill allows additional lanes, called FAST lanes, to be built that would aid all interstate drivers. FAST lanes are a user option, meaning that those who choose to use them pay for the additional interstate capacity. The fees for the FAST lanes are collected from voluntary users only on the new FAST lanes by means of non-cash electronic technology, thereby keeping traffic moving smoothly without tolls or tollbooths. Those who choose not to use the FAST lanes would benefit by having fewer cars in the existing lanes. In addition, the fees collected are dedicated only to the facility on which they are paying. Once the revenues pay off the costs of the expanded interstate facility, the fee collection disappears.

In addition, the bill would foster an improved economy. The construction of additional lanes means more jobs. In fact, every \$1 billion dollars in highway investment leads to up to 47,500 jobs. The reduction in congestion would allow freight to be transported more efficiently, saving fuel and productive time, passing the savings onto the end consumers of the transported goods.

States need the flexibility to use other techniques to tailor the transportation solutions that make sense for them. I encourage you to join the effort to alleviate congestion on our interstates with the use of FAST lanes by cosponsoring H.R. 1767. If you have any question, please feel free to contact me at 1-888-846-7622, ext. 1150. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Julie R. Luther
Senior Vice President of Government
and Industry Relations